

Eighty species of birds are assigned to the Galapagan Avifauna in this memoir, besides some 40 subspecies. It will be observed that the original idea of the term "subspecies" being restricted to cases in which intermediate forms occur has here been quite abandoned. There are, of course, no intermediate forms between species confined to different islands, but they are none the less treated as "subspecies."

The field-notes are of great interest, especially those relating to the Geospizine Finches, which appear to have been very carefully studied. They are all placed by the authors in one genus (*Geospiza*), with 18 species and numerous subspecies. *Certhidea*, referred to the Mniotiltide, has 2 species, which are divided into 8 subspecies.

It must not be supposed, however, from what has been said that we do not approve of this piece of work. On the contrary, it is a valuable contribution to a most engaging subject—that of the origin of insular Avifaunas. Next to the Hawaiian Archipelago, the Galapagan group perhaps presents a more favourable opportunity for the discussion of this most interesting question than any other part of the earth's surface. We are therefore grateful to Messrs. Snodgrass and Heller for the pains which they have taken in working out this important collection.

61. *Stejneger on Oreomyza.*

[A new Name for the Hawaiian Bird-genus *Oreomyza*. By Leonhard Stejneger. Pr. Biol. Soc. Washington, xvi. p. 11 (1903).]

Oreomystis is proposed, *Oreomyza* being already occupied in entomology.

XXIII.—*Letters, Extracts, Notices, and Obituary.*

WE have received the following letters addressed to "The Editors of 'The Ibis'":—

SIRS,—On a recent passage from New York to England I was struck by observing Snow-Buntings (*Plectrophanes nivalis*) on migration in mid-Atlantic. I was previously under the impression that this species migrated practically North and South. That numbers of them apparently cross the

Atlantic from West to East was certainly new to me, and the evidence may be worth recording. The birds were first met with on October 11th (lat. 45° N., long. 15° W.). They kept passing us on the 12th, 13th, and 14th (lat. 50° N., long. 15° W.). They were not in large numbers, but I saw from a dozen to a score, singly and in twos and threes, during each of these four days. It was difficult to observe their original direction, as they sighted the ship before we saw them and altered their course towards it. On leaving the vessel the majority held on due east. With half the Atlantic between them and land they were travelling with a buoyant undulating flight and shewing no signs of fatigue. Only one or two settled on board, and those only for a minute or two. They passed and circled round the big liner (running 18 or 19 miles an hour) as if she were standing still. As a guess I should say that they were travelling well over 60 miles an hour. Now the length of time for which a Snow-Bunting can sustain flight with no possibility of feeding must necessarily be very limited. From what I saw I can only conclude that *Plectrophanes nivalis* is quite capable of crossing the Atlantic Ocean in one flight, and probably does not require 48 hours for the journey.

I saw no other land-birds during the voyage.

Yours &c.,

A. L. BUTLER

(Director of Game-Preservation,
Soudan Government).

Khartoum, Soudan,
Dec. 21st, 1903.

SIRS,—A few weeks ago I acquired at a small bird-dealer's shop a living Chaffinch (*Fringilla caelebs*) which had been caught in a wild state in this country in the autumn of 1902. The bird is a male, in beautiful condition, and may be described as follows:—Head and nearly the whole of the upper parts pale canary-yellow; mantle bright yellow; lower part of back yellow with a greenish tinge. A few of the primaries on both sides and a few of the smaller feathers were of the usual colour. Tail yellow, with two of the outer feathers on each side dark. Underside yellow mixed with the usual wine-colour. Sides almost wholly yellow.

Bill, except the tip, which is black, and legs flesh-coloured. Eyes brown.

On the same occasion I got a female Chaffinch which is of a light havana or buff-colour all over, with the usual light markings.

Both are fine birds, but the male is really a very handsome object.

Yours &c.,

Gooilust, 's Graveland,
Hilversum, Holland,
January 12, 1904.

F. E. BLAAUW.

SIRS,—In the notice of Herr C. E. Hellmayr's recent synopsis of the Paridæ, Sittidæ, and Certhiidæ (*supra*, p. 154) it is asked ". . . how many Members of the B. O. U. could distinguish (*[erthia] brachydactyla* from *C. familiaris* or *C. britannica* . . . from either of them?"

I do not think that the difficulty is so great as this question implies, and, as I have an adequate series of each of the three forms before me, perhaps I may be allowed to indicate the characters by which I find myself able to separate them with little difficulty. To facilitate comparison I have arranged the characters in tabular form:—

(a) <i>C. familiaris familiaris</i> .	(b) <i>C. familiaris britannica</i> .	(c) <i>C. brachydactyla</i> .
i. Whole dorsal aspect more hoary than in <i>b</i> or <i>c</i> , due to the enlargement and paler coloration of the light area of the separate feathers.	Upper surface darker and more rufous, light portion of feathers buff.	Upper surface distinctly darker than <i>a</i> and less suffused with rufous than <i>b</i> , light area of feathers grey.
ii. Forehead distinctly spotted like crown.	Forehead spotted as in <i>a</i> .	Forehead unspotted or indistinctly spotted.
iii. No dark spot on under-wing.	No dark spot on under-wing.	A dark mark on the under wing-coverts just in front of 1st primary.
iv. Rump lighter than in <i>b</i> or <i>c</i> .	Rump darker and more richly coloured.	Rump darker and more richly coloured.
v. Lower abdomen and flanks hardly tinged with rust-colour.	Flanks rust-coloured.	Flanks rust-coloured.
vi. Bill shorter than in <i>c</i> .	Bill shorter than in <i>c</i> .	Bill averaging distinctly longer in both sexes than in <i>a</i> or <i>b</i> .

I freely admit that one or more of these characters might break down if applied to particular individuals. These forms of *Certhia* well illustrate a remark in Dr. J. A. Allen's paper "So-called Species and Subspecies" ('Science,' N.S., xvi. pp. 383-386; 5th September, 1902):—"They present to the eye differences that are sufficiently impressive, but which, owing to the imperfection of descriptive terms, cannot be adequately expressed in keys or diagnoses."

Yours &c.,

4 Stanhope Place,
St. Leonard's-on-Sea,
30th January, 1904.

W. RUSKIN BUTTERFIELD.

SIRS,—A short time ago Mr. Clement J. Carroll sent me for identification the skin of a small bird, which proved to be that of a Little Bunting, *Emberiza pusilla*, Pallas, in winter dress. Mr. A. Holt Macpherson, to whom I shewed the skin, agreed with my identification of it. It had been caught alive with bird-lime, in the beginning of October 1902, at Pailton, near Rugby, and since then, down to the present winter, it had lived in a cage. It was sold to Mr. Carroll at the end of last year, but died soon afterwards, when it was skinned by Miss Williams of Dublin, who ascertained that it was a male. This is the fourth (the third in point of date) occurrence of the Little Bunting in Great Britain. Three out of the four examples occurred in the month of October, and the fourth was brought alive to the late Mr. Swaysland on the 2nd of November. Gätke gives the dates of the occurrences of about thirty-five examples of this Bunting on Heligoland; and almost all these were in October or the last week in September.

Yours &c.,

Bloxham, Oxon,
23rd Feb., 1904.

O. V. APLIN.

SIRS,—Permit me to draw attention to the exceptional migration of Waxwings (*Ampelis garrulus*) to Ireland—chiefly the north—in the latter part of 1903. The numbers have apparently never been surpassed, as may be seen on

comparison with the records in the 'Irish Naturalist' and elsewhere.

Between Oct. 22nd and Dec. 21st no less than 14 specimens were reported from the Counties of Antrim, Armagh, Kildare, and Derry, and this is doubtless by no means a complete list.

It would be interesting to learn whether many individuals were observed about the same time in other parts of Britain, which would perhaps give the line of this unusual migration.

For details see Mr. Patterson's note in the 'Irish Naturalist' of Feb. 1904, Mr. Wright's in 'The Zoologist' of Dec. 1903, and my own in the 'Avicultural Magazine' of Jan. 1904.

Yours &c.,

Lismore,
Windsor, Belfast.

W. H. WORKMAN.

New Fossil Form referred to the Struthioncs.—At the meeting of the Zoological Society of London on Jan. 19th last Dr. Andrews described a new fossil form of the order Struthioncs, based on the distal end of the tibio-tarsus of a large bird which he had himself obtained from the Upper Eocene Beds of the Fayûm in Egypt, where it was found associated with remains of *Paleomastodon* and *Arsinoitherium*. It was suggested that this form (which it was proposed to call *Eremopezus eocenus*) might have been an ancestral relative of the Struthionideæ and Epyornithideæ.

A new Finch from Java.—In 1902, Dr. Finsch (Notes Leyd. Mus. xxiii. p. 151) described a remarkable new species of Finch of the genus *Crithagra*, based on a single female example sent to him by his energetic correspondent Herr Max Martels, of Pasir Datar, in Java, and named it *Crithagra estheræ*, after his daughter. He has now received from the same correspondent an adult male example of this form and describes and figures both sexes in the January number of the 'Journal für Ornithologie' (p. 122, tab. A). The new Finch is very curiously coloured with brown, white,

and yellow, and is surprisingly distinct from every other known species. It was discovered by Herr Martels on the extinct Volcano Pangerango, at a height of 6000 feet above the sea-level.

Wytsman's 'Genera Avium.'—Mr. Wytsman has sent us a "specimen part" of his proposed work on the 'Genera of Birds,' to the plan of which we called attention in our last issue (see above, p. 171). It has been prepared by Mr. Ernst Hartert, and contains a clear and concise synopsis of the family Eurylæmidæ, written in English, which is to be the language of the whole work. After a short introduction and bibliography, the family is divided into two subfamilies, and the genera and species of each are treated in systematic order. The species are shortly diagnosed and their exact localities are indicated. A coloured plate drawn by Keulemans illustrates the structure of the genera and portrays *Serilophus lunatus rothschildi* of Perak.

Lieut. Boyd Alexander's Expedition to Upper Nigeria.—Our much-valued friend and correspondent Lieut. Boyd Alexander, of the Rifle Brigade, left England by the West-African Mail-Steamer on Feb. 27th last, at the head of a new scientific expedition for the exploration of the eastern parts of Northern Nigeria and the countries bordering on Lake Chad. He is accompanied by his brother Lt.-Col. Alexander of the Scots Guards (as surveyor) and Capt. G. B. Gosling of the Rifle Brigade. On reaching the mouth of the Niger the party will be joined by José Lopez, the Portuguese taxidermist, who went with Lieut. Alexander to Fernando Po; Braima Dumbana (a Hausa from Kuka), who will act as guide; and Hadji Abu Bukar, an Arab interpreter. Thence they will proceed by steamer up the Niger to Lokoja and follow the Benué as far as the mouth of its northern tributary, the Gongola, in about 12° E. long. The River Gongola will be ascended in two light steel boats, which have been taken out with the party in sections, to a place called Tonga, in about 11° N. lat. Here the headquarters of the

expedition will remain for at least three months, while excursions will be made into the adjacent districts of Bauchi, Katagum, and South Bornu, and every sort of information about the topography, geology, and natural history of the country will be amassed. We need hardly assure the readers of 'The Ibis' that the birds of Tonga will receive their full share of attention, José Lopez being an experienced collector. After leaving Tonga it is proposed to explore the valley of the River Komadugu, which enters Lake Chad at Yo, and thence to pass into the northern portion of the German colony of Kamerun. But the exact route of return must depend on circumstances. General Sir Frederick Lugard has promised every possible assistance to the expedition.

British Ornithologists abroad.—Besides Captain Boyd Alexander, several other ornithological friends are now away, "*ultra quatuor maria.*" Mr. Scott Wilson, whose previously announced departure was delayed by an accident (see 'Ibis,' 1902, p. 354) and other circumstances, is now on his way to Tahiti; Mr. M. J. Nicoll is in Lord Crawford's yacht, the 'Valhalla,' in the West Indies, and writes to us from Grenada, having previously visited Barbadoes and St. Lucia; Mr. Douglas Carruthers is at Beyrout, being temporarily attached to the Museum of the Syrian Protestant College there; and Mr. Howard Saunders has taken refuge in Southern Spain, whence, however, he proposes to return in time for our Anniversary Meeting on May 11th.

The Society for the Protection of Birds.—Every member of the B. O. U., we are sure, will sympathise generally with the objects of the Society for the Protection of Birds, and will be pleased to hear that the thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Society (which was held on February 24th last) was well attended, a good account of its progress being given. The Report of the Committee (published at 3 Hanover Square) informs us that the efforts of the Society in 1903 have been directed principally into three channels—the

better protection of the breeding-places of our rarer birds ; the extension of " Bird-and-Tree-day " competitions : and the further exposure of the " artificial-osprey-fraud " and the protest against bird-trimmed ladies' hats. With the first and last we shall all thoroughly agree, but we are not quite sure that the Bird-and-Tree-day movement may not be carried to excess in some directions, unless great care be taken.

As regards the so-called " artificial ospreys," it is satisfactory to know that there can no longer be any doubt as to their real origin. A number of these alleged artefacts, purchased in some of the leading milliners' shops and submitted to experts, have been pronounced to be in every case (whether priced at 21s. or 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ l.) entirely composed of the breeding-plumes of birds of the Heron-family.

The Committee have decided to apply to the Privy Council for a Charter of Corporation, which will, no doubt, be granted to the Society in due course.

Obituary.—MR. J. S. BUDGETT and MR. W. G. DOGGETT.

JOHN SAMUEL BUDGETT, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, Balfour Student of the University, who died at Cambridge on the 19th of February last, at the early age of 31 years, from fever contracted in the Niger-Delta, was a promising zoologist of the best type, being equally good at work in the museum and in the field. Before he attained final success in the acquisition of materials for the study of the development of the fishes of the genus *Polypterus* (which he had set before himself as a special piece of work) Budgett had visited some of the least healthy spots in tropical Africa four times, and up to his last journey had escaped unscathed. Budgett was not specially an ornithologist, but he was a careful observer and knew the West-African ornithology well. In this Journal for 1901 (p. 481) will be found an excellent article on the Birds of the Gambia, which, so far as we know, was his only published contribution to our branch of zoology.

WALTER GRIMWOOD DOGGETT, whose death has lately been reported to the Foreign Office, was 27 years of age. He was the son of Mr. F. Doggett, taxidermist, of Cambridge.

Mr. Doggett was selected in 1899 by Dr. Selater to accompany Sir Harry Johnston's Special Mission to Uganda as collector. He was an admirable photographer and many of his beautiful photographs adorn Sir Harry Johnston's book on the Uganda Protectorate. He was also a very clever draughtsman, and might have risen to some little eminence through his paintings alone. He was a very good shot with the rifle, and a horseman that could ride any mount. In fact, before he started for Uganda, he had been galloper to the commanding officer of a volunteer regiment. All who travelled with him in tropical Africa noted him as remarkable for a good temper that scarcely anything could ruffle, and a cheery optimism under all circumstances. After being for some time in Sir Harry Johnston's service, he entered that of the Uganda Administration, and was thereupon attached as naturalist to the Anglo-German Boundary Commission. Accompanying this Commission, he studied the fauna and flora and collected specimens on the banks of the River Kagera, the ultimate source of the Nile and the most important affluent of the Victoria Nyanza, which it enters on the west coast, just under the Equator. Mr. Doggett was drowned by the capsizing of a canoe when attempting to cross the Kagera.

Biological investigations in Africa have sustained a serious loss in this abrupt termination of a promising career, as, although Mr. Doggett had not much scientific knowledge, he was an admirable collector, and his anthropological studies were becoming of distinct scientific value. His name has already been attached to not a few species of animals (chiefly Invertebrates) and to one or two striking species of plants. Doggett was the first naturalist to observe the *Balaniceps* on Lake Victoria and to send home specimens from that new locality (see 'Ibis,' 1901, p. 157).—H. H. J.